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THE CHILDREN'S TEETH.

BY A FATHER OF A FAMILY.

A VERY important subject—so important, that I will venture to ask all parents who have growing children not to pass hastily by this paper. Few persons fully realise the value of teeth till these are injured or lost. In the nature of things it cannot be expected that children should understand the value of their own teeth; and our knowledge, or painful experience, ought to be employed to guard them from the consequences of their natural ignorance. The well-being of the teeth in childhood concerns all their future life. Bad teeth mean bad digestion, and what that means some of my readers understand perhaps too well. Very good abilities may fail in good results for want of health and strength; and the decline of these is at times distinctly connected with imperfect mastication.

It must be admitted at the outset that the children's teeth often stand a very poor chance, or to be accurate, no chance at all. What things they do with their teeth! Crack nuts, untie knots, crunch hard sugar-plums almost like stones; in fact children do almost anything with their teeth, except clean them. Now, if the hair or nails are left uncared for, one quickly hears the remark, 'How Mrs Blank neglects her children;' but the poor little mouth may be a perfect magazine of future misery, and the neglect pass quite unnoticed. A man who gives his daughter an elegant set of jewels on her coming of age, is counted an indulgent father; but a man who has by his care secured for his girl a perfect set of teeth, has done a far better thing for her.

The first mischief I will notice is *crowding*. Very few jaws have room enough for all the thirty-two teeth which will in time demand their places. Nothing is more common than to find the teeth so crowded that one or more are pushed out of line, and project beyond the others, or lean inwards towards the tongue, instead of standing perfectly upright. And even where there is no such dis-

placement, there is sometimes an intense pressure; the teeth are jammed against one another with a tightness which is almost incredible to those who have not given any attention to the subject. Sometimes, indeed, a tooth will turn sideways under this severe pressure. Now, in such cases it is simply impossible that the enamel can be properly deposited. This hard outer surface is the life of the tooth, and when it is thin and weak, that life must be a short one. As soon as the enamel is gone, the inner bone quickly decays, until in time the nerve is reached, and then comes the acute pain known as 'toothache.' What is wanted in most young mouths is the sacrifice of one or two of the weakest teeth, in order to give the others room to get all the enamel the system can supply, and thus grow strong. Happy the growing lad or girl who has between the teeth sufficient space to admit a half-worn shilling! It will be his or her own fault if there is not a good set of teeth in that mouth in after-years. Yet I have heard an ignorant nurse express her dislike of a girl's mouth which had in it this promise of exemption from *caries* and dentistry, with all their tortures. But where there is not room enough, it must be made, and as that cannot be done by stretching the jaw, the only alternative is to thin out the crowded teeth, or they will in time destroy one another. But papa is often so busy, and mamma so tender, that the painful duty is put off, perhaps too long. And sometimes both parents are ignorant of the cruelty which they are unconsciously inflicting on their youthful charge—none the less real because unintended. I am not a dentist, and do not wish to be suspected of writing in the interests of that profession; but my own experience has made me very inflexible on this point, and when my pet's mouths shew symptoms of being crowded, they have an early interview with my good friend Mr Forceps. In too many cases, if the irregularity of the teeth is not very striking in *appearance*—that deity of feeble and narrow minds—the irregularity is suffered to continue, in miserable disregard of the fact that the presence of a few superfluous teeth

may insure the ruin of the rest, and cause untold suffering in after-years. Crowding, then, is the first point for parents to watch against.

Next of course comes want of *cleaning*. It is an unsavoury subject, I grant; but it cannot be passed over if the question is to be fairly dealt with. At the bottom of the teeth, touching the gums, may constantly be found a rim of some pasty substance, white or yellowish in colour. I speak of the mouths of children of course; grown-up sensible people know better than to allow any such unpleasant accumulation in their own. Now this substance is the deadly enemy of the teeth. It is often of a very acid nature, and eats away the enamel most certainly, and not very slowly. Let this deposit alone, and the teeth are doomed; for the 'neck' of a tooth—the point at which it touches the gum—is its weakest part. It is there, above all, that decay is likely to begin; and it is just at that point that 'stopping' is most difficult. Moreover, that deposit is promoted by the free use of animal food; small pieces of the fibre and of the fat cling around the teeth and get between them, keeping the mischief at work. To neutralise this, it is well to rinse the mouth with an alkaline wash, not too strong; ordinary soda-water being excellent for the purpose. Especially should this be done at night before retiring to rest, as the acids of the mouth gather strength in the night, and if habitually allowed to work undisturbed for eight or nine hours, can do considerable harm. Indeed if the teeth can only be cleaned once in the twenty-four hours, I unhesitatingly give the preference to the evening. Let the *débris* of the day's work be cleared away, and not left to undergo the chemical changes which are certain to ensue if they are left undisturbed for hours, with warmth and moisture to promote decomposition. The bad taste which is often found in a neglected mouth in the morning may prove to its owner that these cautions are warranted by facts. The unpleasant odour issuing from a neglected mouth is only too convincing to others. The habit of occasionally rinsing the mouth during the day is, when practicable, of great service. Those who cannot afford expensive toilet preparations will find that a very little plain yellow soap—a mere touch on the brush—is an admirable substitute for costly dentifrices and washes. Indeed I doubt if, as has before been indicated in this *Journal*, yellow soap is not in every way the best substance for cleaning the teeth.

And now a word or two about improper ways of cleaning the teeth. This is eminently a matter in which 'overdoing is undoing.' A lad is told of the evils of neglect, and resolves to attend to his teeth in future. He buys, or has given him, a brush as hard as wire; and with this—and perhaps a scouring tooth-powder—he rubs away with youthful zeal, might and main, at his luckless teeth. It is like the monks finishing what the Goths began. The movement is nearly all horizontal; the angle of the hard brush presses on the necks of the teeth; the water and the powder help its action, and the youngster might almost as well *file* away at the necks of his teeth. He can cut them by the combined action named above, as certainly, though not so quickly, as by filing. The brush should be soft, and the rubbing should be up and down, as well as along the

line of the teeth. Care should be taken not to place undue pressure on the bottom of the teeth, and especially not to apply the *angle* of the bristles to their necks. A quill toothpick may be used with advantage before beginning to clean the teeth, to remove anything that has lodged firmly; indeed, its frequent use is desirable, except at the dinner-table. Acid medicines are extremely injurious to the teeth, and should always be taken through a glass tube or a straw. The old muriatic preparations of iron and steel have ruined many a set of teeth. Happily, there are now solutions of iron which are not acid, but which had better be promptly washed off the teeth by rinsing, all the same.

To some readers these remarks may be familiar truths; many others will be but too well aware of their necessity. The results of ignorance and neglect in this matter are truly calamitous, and very extensive. I do not wish to see a generation rising up around me of young people who delight in 'showing their teeth' on every occasion; but I should be glad to save some of the young from the inevitable results of carelessness; and I see—too often—young people for whom, I am sure, there is much future trouble in store. The family doctor might often render most valuable service to his youthful patients by taking more notice of their teeth. And he should not content himself with a mere hint; but if he finds the matter neglected, should explain its importance, and insist that what is needful be done. I hope this is not beneath the dignity of the profession. It ought not to be. All the resources of surgical science are employed to remedy a hare-lip; an important and most delicate operation is undertaken to cure a squint. (Appearances again!) Why then should a decaying tooth be left to infect its healthy neighbour? Why should superfluous teeth be allowed to injure the whole set? No one knows so well as a doctor what are the consequences of defective mastication and imperfect assimilation of food. Let him picture to himself the child's future sufferings from toothache and neuralgia, often culminating in dyspepsia and hypochondria, and he will scarcely hesitate to order the aid of a good dentist while it can be of real service. Of course there are cases of constitutional feebleness in which the teeth would probably decay whatever was done for them; but there is also, beyond question, much preventable mischief and needless suffering.

If this paper has the result of directing more attention on the part of doctors and parents to the children's teeth, it will not have been written in vain. Nothing which helps to lessen the sum of human suffering is unimportant; and on the stamina of the rising race depends the well-being of future generations.

YOUNG LORD PENRITH.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—BEFORE THE MAGISTRATE.

'VERY well, Mr Linklater,' said the capitalist to the confidential clerk, who, coming down by the earliest train that started in the gray dawning, alighted at Hollow Oak with the deed-box, lacquered, patent-locked, and with hinges of extra strength, in his careful custody; 'I am obliged by your punctuality. You had better stay, though. We are going, this gentleman and myself'

—pointing out Hugh—‘before a magistrate, and you might as well be present as an extra witness.’

Mr Linklater, one of those tall, gaunt Aberdonians whom the City of Granite sends out to do hard work and win hard cash by willing labour, was at his chief's disposal, of course. But he looked with no trifling perplexity from his employer to the young station-master, and back again, as if marvelling what connection there could be between scrip, shares, and discount, which formed the current grist to the mill at Guildhall Chambers, and country magistrates, Hollow Oak Station, and Hugh the master of that station.

But Mr Linklater, whose previous civic experiences had been eminently unromantic, and who knew more of tare and tret, of agios, caravan, commission, bulk-breaking, and other miscellaneous items of commerce, than he did of the real flesh-and-blood world outside the doors of a counting-house, had soon further cause for wonder. For into the station glided, ghost-like, the wasted form and weird face of Gipsy Nan, draped, it is true, in squalid garments, quite unlike the picturesque attire of her kindred in Spain or the East, but wearing them with a savage dignity such as would have beseeemed a propheticess of some barbarian race. She walked direct towards Hugh Ashton.

‘Follow me,’ said the gipsy boldly, ‘son of the Red Hand, for I am come to wash the stain of blood away! I saw the shot fired. I saw the man stagger, and put his hand to his side, and turn his face fronting his enemy, as a wounded stag turns on the dogs, and then fall. He tried to speak; but the blood ebbed fast, and the life with it, and he did not frame a word. But he is living yet who fired the gun. Ha! it will be a brave show when they bring James Grewler back, in chains, to Alfringham—a braver, when he hangs within the jail walls of Dorchester. Now I am ready, if you will, to go before your judge!’

At another time, Mr Dicker would have proved no patient listener to Gipsy Nan's tirade. But now he welcomed the woman's wild words, as lending valuable confirmation to the story which he and Hugh had to tell. The capitalist could not doubt that in Ghost Nan he saw the surviving sister of the gipsy emigrant who had died in Australia. Half-crazed she certainly seemed to be, and there were doubts as to how far her testimony would be respected at the Central Criminal Court. But, if she were not held a credible witness in the prosecution of Marmaduke Beville's real murderer, at anyrate her evidence was worth having on behalf of George, his dead brother.

‘Get her into the fly; it is waiting at the *Beville Arms* by this time,’ whispered the capitalist to Hugh; ‘and hold her there, by force if necessary, till we get to Marsden Hall. What should I have said, a week ago, if I had been told that I should alight at the door of a country gentleman, and one of our shareholders, in company with a half-mad gipsy beggar-woman like this!’

Sir Henry Marsden, Chairman, as Mr Mould the Director had truly said, of some Sessions, Petty or Quarter, within the shire of Dorset, was an active magistrate, and perhaps as favourable a specimen of Her Majesty's justices of the peace as it was possible to light upon. It might truly be said of him that he was an estated gentleman

and a baronet if you please, but a magistrate before all things. His estate bordered on that of Lord Penrith, and would have seemed more considerable had he not had a lord for his immediate neighbour. He had been invited to contest the county in parliament. But he thought little of the extent of his acres, and less of the chance of recording a silent vote at divisions, in comparison with his reputation for being able and upright on the Bench. There were barristers now and then in the modest court over which he presided who were irreverent enough to express the wish that all our legal bigwigs had the sense and patience of Sir Henry Marsden.

It was perhaps lucky that Sir Henry was the magistrate referred to. An ordinary squire might have been dull and helpless. A clerical justice, or some retired admiral pitchforked into the commission of the peace, would have boggled over every detail. But the baronet gave the whole case his best and most courteous attention, and such questions as he asked were thoroughly to the purpose. By good fortune the clerk to the magistrates was in the house, having come over to Marsden Hall on county business, and Gipsy Nan was persuaded to make her affidavit with tolerable coherence. There could be no reasonable doubt that the Nan, Nana, or Anne Cooper mentioned in the gipsy emigrant's death-bed deposition in Australia was the same person as the vagrant then present. As little doubt could there exist that the employer of Salem Jackson, in his treacherous theft of the Company's cash-box at Hollow Oak, was the false steward who had plundered Lord Penrith, and the real assassin of Marmaduke Beville.

‘We will get this sailor-fellow—this Jackson,’ said Sir Henry confidentially to Mr Dicker, whom he well knew by reputation, ‘immediately transferred from the care of the borough to the county police, and I will make a point of seeing him before I sleep. From what you tell me, I feel sure that he will save himself by revealing all he knows; and I feel equally sure of the identity of this Swart the Miller of Pen Mawth, in Cornwall, with the James Grewler who was steward when I was a lad at Alfringham, and who made off with a great sum of my lord's money. Yes, yes; there had been two generations of the Grewlers, stewards, before him; and this young James had been sent to the university at Lord Penrith's expense, for he was a good scholar; but he came away in disgrace, and his father was glad to get him made steward in his stead, here. The very year after the murder, old Thomas Grewler died, and this precious son of his levanted with a large sum. I thought he was dead. But I hope to see him committed yet for trial at the assizes.’

‘Shall we hang him—the Miller, I mean?’ asked Mr Dicker in a low tone, of the magistrate.

‘I'm very much afraid not,’ answered Sir Henry with a smile. ‘I am speaking now, of course, as a private person; but in my opinion the scoundrel will save that ugly neck of his. Juries, you see, are squeamish. The thing happened long ago. This queer woman’—dropping his voice still lower—‘is not to be relied upon. Any clever counsel for the defence could play the bear with her evidence. She has sworn to her brother's handwriting, and sworn to her own deposition; but I doubt whether twelve men in

a box would believe her in a matter of life and death. And she may never appear at the assizes. Why she came now, as a volunteer, it is hard to say; but perhaps she scented out, through some secret channel of information, what was on foot, and chose to have a finger in the pie. But if the Miller of to-day, and faithless steward of a quarter of a century back, escapes penal servitude for the rest of his rascally life, call me a false prophet!

Towards Hugh, the magistrate was not only courteous but kind. 'Allow me, Mr Hugh Beville,' he said, taking his hand, 'to be the first of your neighbours to welcome you, and to greet you by your own name. There is an old friendship between our families; and I knew your father, and your uncle too, poor fellow, in my young days.'

One duty, which could not well be deputed to a more appropriate person, Sir Henry undertook to discharge. He offered to go in person to Alfringham, without delay, taking with him the proofs of Hugh's descent, and of George Beville's innocence, and there, through Mrs Stanhope's intermediation, to break the news to the old lord.

'You should pity him—your grandfather, I mean—Mr Beville,' said Sir Henry Marsden, as he ordered round his carriage, having first, but vainly, pressed his hospitality on the unexpected visitors. 'We, who live near, have seen the canker of that mistaken belief poison his whole life.'

'I do pity him,' answered Hugh, in softened tones, 'from my very heart.'

Then Sir Henry, with all the papers in his possession, drove off to Alfringham, promising that on the morrow warrants should be issued, which, duly indorsed by the authorities of the county of Cornwall, would authorise the arrest of the Black Miller. Nan stalked off, ghost-like, towards the Forest, disregarding alike Hugh's thanks and Mr Dicker's offers of money; and so soon as the fly from the *Beville Arms* had jolted back to Hollow Oak, Mr Dicker took a kind farewell of Hugh, and went back, by the next up-train, to London, accompanied by his clerk. How strange it was to Hugh to find himself back at his little station, and to continue to perform his duties of routine, while his brain was in a whirl of excitement; and when he remembered that into the last few hours had been crowded more of stirring news than most of us hear in a lifetime. But his work, he felt, was not yet done until the murderer of his uncle had been dragged into the light of day.

CHAPTER XLIX.—LORD PENRITH DIES.

Left alone once more at Hollow Oak Station, Hugh began almost to doubt whether the events of the last two days were not merely the idle fancies of a dreamer's brain. So rapidly had one surprise succeeded to another, that a sense of unreality attached even to the recent vindication of his father's name. Hugh felt what we all feel when some goal to attain to which we have striven long is reached at last—a startling contrast between the marvellous ease with which success is grasped, and the painful efforts and anguish of hope deferred that preceded the final triumph. Not that in Hugh's case the success was even yet certain. His grandfather's prejudiced resentment against the son he had cast off might be impregnable to

proof or reason, and Sir Henry's kindly mission prove a failure. It would be hard if justice should not be rendered at the last to George Beville's memory, by the father whose good opinion he had desired so ardently to regain, and if Lord Penrith should choose to go out of the world without a gentle thought or fond word for the son who had passed his life in unmerited want and disgrace.

Hours passed, and no tidings came. Hugh went about his duties as usual; but for once he performed them with a cold mechanical precision, as a sleep-walker might have done. The porters collected in little knots, whispering to one another, and throwing sidelong glances at their official superior. Rumour is many-tongued, even at such places as Hollow Oak, and it was partly guessed, and partly known, that a great change was imminent in Hugh's fortunes. It was the dejection of his attitude and the anxious look which he could not conceal, that perplexed the men who watched him, wondering that sudden prosperity should bring with it so little joy. It was dusk already, and would soon be night, when through the gloom of the winter evening flashed the bright lamps of a carriage. It was an Alfringham carriage, and out of it sprang Dr Bland.

'Mr Ashton—Mr Beville rather,' said the doctor eagerly, 'I have come, at Lord Penrith's urgent wish, to ask you, to implore you to come to him at once. I have a note too—here it is—from Mrs Stanhope, begging you to lose no time. Delay may be dangerous. I will not disguise from you that my noble patient is sinking fast. He cannot, humanly speaking, live through the night. And he cannot die in peace—these are his own words—till he has been reconciled to George Beville's son.'

'I will go,' answered Hugh with emotion. 'Yesterday, I must have refused. To-day, I can cross the threshold of my grandfather's house with no feeling of anger or of shame.'

A minute more, and the carriage had rolled swiftly off towards Alfringham, with Hugh and the doctor. 'Is recovery or any improvement in his condition impossible?' asked the former, as they sped onwards.

'Quite impossible,' answered Dr Bland, more decisively than physicians can usually be brought to speak. 'For days it has been evident that his lordship's life hung by a thread; and the emotion caused by the news Sir Henry brought, gently as it was communicated to him by his sister, caused a syncope that lasted long, and which I feared would be fatal. His mind is clear now, and he has rallied somewhat; but I am convinced that it is but the last flicker of expiring vitality. My lord holds on to life for but one object, now.' The remainder of the short drive was passed in silence.

Alfringham at last! and the sound of the wished-for wheels had clearly been anxiously awaited, so promptly were the wide doors flung open, to reveal the lighted entrance-hall within. Hugh, guided by Dr Bland, entered, still feeling as though all around him stretched a dream-world, shadowy and unreal. He scarcely saw the marble columns, the polished floor, the gleam of statues, or the array of liveried servants to left and right, bowing their powdered heads in deference to him who, in an hour's time, perhaps, might be the lord of Alfringham.

All seemed real enough, however, though the reality was a strange and sad one, when, after traversing a portion of the great house, Hugh found himself inducted into the stately chamber in which the aged master of so much that the world covets, of rank, fortune, splendour, and power, had laid him down to die. Mrs Stanhope was there, and so was Maud, and both greeted Hugh as he came in, but silently and, as it were, timidly. All appeared to feel the involuntary awe that impresses itself on even the most frivolous when Azrael, the Angel of Death, spreads his sable wings above the house of the living. There was a solemn hush in the old lord's room. Even the feeble ticking of the French clock on the massy chimney-piece, even the feebler tinkle of the charred embers as they dropped, ruby-red, from the half-consumed logs blazing on the hearth, could be heard with a painful distinctness. Many waxlights were burning, and the curtains of the great bed, carved and gilded, were drawn back, so that the face of the old lord, almost as white as were the pillows on which it rested, could be plainly seen.

The first to break the oppressive silence was the dying man.

'Stand nearer—nearer to me, yet—Hugh Beville!' he said, in a thin, weak voice, but with an ineffectual attempt to raise himself. 'I am glad that you have come, boy—come to forgive the old man, before he goes. I—did your—father—cruel injustice, and— Here his voice failed him, and he fainted; and they feared that he was dead, and crowded closer to the bed, while Dr Bland made haste to apply remedies. With some difficulty the old lord was enabled to swallow a few drops of the cordial that the physician had poured out, and as his eyes slowly unclosed themselves they lit on Hugh's face.

'I was not mistaken, then, as to the likeness,' muttered Lord Penrith feebly. 'I thought, at the station, that it was a spirit come to haunt me—the spirit of my poor wronged boy—but I know better now. You are very like your father, Hugh. He would have forgiven me, I know. Can you do it?'

'Indeed, my lord, I can,' answered Hugh, in a softened voice, as he knelt down beside the bed, and took the wan weak hand of the aged lord in his. 'But in truth there is nothing to forgive, only a sad mistake, and a sad estrangement, though my father never spoke of you to me otherwise than with affection and respect.'

'Poor George! poor George!' muttered the old peer, as he looked long and fixedly, regretfully, as it seemed, at Hugh's handsome sun-bronzed face and manly bearing. His conscience, lulled to rest through many years by the dogged conviction that he was right in his harsh judgment of the despised and discarded younger son, was painfully awake now, and perhaps he saw George Beville's gentle goodness of character in a clearer light than ever he had done before the family tragedy had been played out to the bitter end. There was something touching in the very earnestness with which the noble owner of Alfringham pleaded for pardon—for pardon from the grandson who had grown up as a stranger, amidst toil and adventure, in climes far remote. Lord Penrith had so wrapped and draped himself, through a long lifetime, in the mantle of his pride, that to see him cast it from him at the last might have melted a sterner heart than that of Hugh Beville.

'My poor banished boy—I wish I could have seen him once again, on this side of the grave,' said the old man, after a pause. 'But you err, Hugh, when you say there is nothing to forgive. May Heaven do so. I was wrong. I was unjust. My wrath blinded me. I would listen to no argument—no plea. And all the time I was a dupe! The knave who ate my bread, and rewarded my trust by treachery, he it was who spilled the dear blood of my murdered Marmaduke. Sir Henry Marsden tells me that Grewler is to be hunted down at once.'

'The man will be made to answer for his crimes, no doubt,' replied Hugh gently.

'Do not spare him!' exclaimed Lord Penrith, with a spark of the fierce energy he had shewn in his youth; but then his restless gaze, as it wandered about the room, fell on Maud's beautiful face, and his mood seemed to change. 'I had forgotten,' he said, almost humbly.—'You too, Maud, my dear, have something for which to blame your old uncle. You will be no heiress, now, dear. Alfringham cannot be yours, as I intended.'

'That will not make me unhappy, dear uncle, believe me,' answered Maud, bending over the dying man as he lay; 'I should have prized it only as your gift.'

'And,' said Hugh, looking up, as he knelt beside the bed, 'if my cousin—I may call her so, to-day—will accept my heart and my love, that have been hers since first we met beside the Welsh lake, and Alfringham along with them, I shall be prouder and happier than ever, in my brightest day-dreams, I dared to picture myself.'

Maud did not speak. All she did was to turn her blushing face shyly towards Hugh, and a glorious smile broke forth, for one instant, through her tears. For an instant only, for then she hid her face in her hands, and wept afresh, while her mother, with fond words of endearment, folded her in her arms.

'You love her, you say! You would marry her?' asked the old lord eagerly. 'Do you know, boy, that in taking her as your wife, you wed no heiress, but a girl, well born, but almost penniless; that not the Penrith coronet only, but Alfringham and all its lands, are your very own; and that you will be, as soon as I am dead, undisputed master here? Do you still wish, knowing this, to marry my niece?'

'I have only one answer to make,' said Hugh simply; 'I love Maud—Miss Stanhope I have always loved, but it was from afar off, as a man might love a star in the heaven above him.' And then he approached the weeping girl, and took her unresisting hand. 'Can you care for me, dearest,' he asked of her, 'rough and plain of speech as I am?'

Then Maud, allowing her hand to rest in Hugh's hand, made answer in her turn falteringly, but distinctly enough for her low accents to reach the ear of the dying man: 'Yes, my love, my love! I can care for you; have cared for you from the first, from the first!' And then she hid her head, sobbing, on her mother's shoulder; and Mrs Stanhope, weeping from mingled sympathy with her daughter and grief for her brother's loss, held out her hand to Hugh.

All had forgotten Dr Bland, who now glided quietly up to the bed, and administered to his

noble patient a few more drops of the cordial. The old lord's failing strength revived a little as he lay helplessly back among his soft pillows.

'That is well,' murmured Lord Penrith, looking alternately at the two fair young faces before him. 'You, my grandson, could not have a sweeter, truer wife than dear Maud Stanhope, and I have lived to learn that my poor George's son is a worthier lord of Alfringham than— Never mind that. Hugh looks every inch of a Beville. I don't care a straw for the rest.—But, don't you think, Julia?'—this was addressed to his sister, and the speaker's mind seemed to have wandered away, as the minds of the dying often do, far from the dread threshold that must so soon be crossed, far from the vague terror that guards the frontiers of the unseen world, to trivial matters which have to do with this one—'don't you think, Julia,' continued the old lord, in his thin reedy voice, 'that Hugh is the image of old Sir Beville Beville, whose picture hangs on the right-hand side of the gallery, between Queen Mary and Villiers, Duke of Buckingham? I never thought that George looked like that, and yet the two are so much alike. But I am glad the boy came—home.'

Home! It was with unaccustomed tears in his eyes, with an unaccustomed tightening of the muscles of his throat, such as grief brings to a strong man used to play his part manfully in a world of hard knocks and scant favour, that Hugh listened to the old lord's words. There had been a pathos in the last sentence which had dropped from those dying lips that had rarely spoken but to threaten or command, that told how different old Marmaduke, Baron Penrith, might have been, had his surroundings been different, had his second son but possessed, with his own gentle purity of soul, the steady fearlessness of Hugh's more self-reliant nature. But it was too late for that now.

'Kiss me, Julia!' said the old lord feebly; and his weeping sister bent to touch his pallid cheek with her lips. 'My will provides yet for you, my dear,' he added, trying to pat her cheek, with that contemptuous kindness which may through life co-exist with a sincere affection; 'and you'll have a better fellow for a son-in-law than that coxcomb Lucius.—Where's Maud? Let her kiss me too! I meant Alfringham to go to Maud; but it's all for the best—the best! Dr Bland, I have been, like some old king, an unconscionable time in dying, but I must ask you to excuse— And Hugh? Not gone! Take me by the hand, boy. I feel as if, while I hold to that strong hand of yours, I hold to life. I wish poor George were here!'

It really did seem as though old Lord Penrith did hold on to life through the grasp which his feeble fingers kept of Hugh's strong right hand; and to the last the old lord strained his failing eyes to distinguish the bold, handsome features of the gallant young man who was to be his heir, and whom he acknowledged to be a fitting representative of the ancient stock of which he came. Then suddenly, Hugh felt the pressure of the weak fingers that clung to his, relax. With a smile upon his face—happier, it well may be, than he had been for five-and-twenty weary years—Lord Penrith had sunk back, and, without a struggle, died. Then Maud and her mother, weeping, were

led away; and Hugh too, slowly and sadly went, leaving the room to the solemn hush of death.

PICTURES OF RURAL LIFE.

THE business and bustle of modern life, with the drain they make on the nervous energy of the worker, render an occasional change of scene welcome and necessary. Numberless, however, as the pursuits of holiday-seekers may be, it is still self-evident that but few gather by mountain-side or sea-shore the full harvest of enjoyment provided in country life to the observant eye and cultured mind.

We have much pleasure in drawing attention to a volume entitled *Wild Life in a Southern County*, by the author of the *Gamekeeper at Home* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co.), descriptive of rural life, by one upon whom the mantle of Gilbert White of Selborne seems to have fallen. The pictures of rural life which abound in the book are drawn with unusual felicity; the dweller in town is transported by its help at once to the by-ways of the country; the habits and appearance of every bird in the hedgerows become familiar to him; the animal life of the forest is passed in review before him; in short the reader may live through the whole cycle of country life, so completely has our author sketched its leading aspects. In company with our author we are brought face to face with Nature in both her rough and her pleasant moods, in a southern county of England; and we feel sure that a country-walk with our friend would do more for our growing appreciation of Nature, than months of close study.

Some of the most charming descriptions here given, are those of bird-life. Reclining with our friend on the downs, with a noble view of hill and plain before us, we note the rise, the poise, and the descent of that sweetest of aerial songsters the lark. In early spring, above the green corn, love-making is in full progress; and far as the eye can see, the air seems alive with them. Around the many-gabled and thatched farm-house of Wick (the southern country farm described by the author), tribes of birds have loved to congregate, building in the ivy and in the eaves, the starlings taking up their abodes in the holes around the chimney. In the early summer, the latter are continually busy feeding their young; perching too, upon an ash about fifty yards from the farm, and chattering to one another in the most voluble manner possible, and only singing when a companion is within sight.

The chirp of the sparrow around the farm-yard is ceaseless. In the nesting season they are particular to secure the most fluffy feathers dropped by the fowls. Amongst the ripening corn they will flutter until they grasp an ear with their claws, and bending it down, revel in it at their leisure. Where the corn has been levelled by rain, they will attack it in hundreds at a time. Every spring the swallows return to the precincts of the farm, repairing their old nests, or building new ones, flying around and near the horses and cattle for the insects found there. In spite of the pity and commiseration drawn forth on behalf of poor cock-robin throughout so many generations of children, we have our belief confirmed that he

is a most pugnacious fellow, never missing an opportunity for a stand-up fight, and choosing the early morn for his battles. When the thrush has made up his mind to attack the ripe gooseberries in the garden, he works himself up in an indirect way towards them; the blackbird, on the contrary, makes a desperate rush forward, and retires about twenty or thirty yards with his booty. In the morning he may be seen in the stream taking his bath and splashing the water over himself with immense energy. Then he retires to a rail, where he prunes his feathers. Our author is never tired in listening to the rich liquid notes of the blackbird. 'There is,' he remarks, 'no note so sweet and deep and melodious as that of the blackbird to be heard in our fields; it is even richer than the nightingale's, though not so varied.'

The nightingale sings best on a fresh spring morning, on the upper and clearer branches of the hawthorn. It may be approached until within a few yards, when the swell of its throat may be seen as it pours forth a flood of melody. The elm is the favourite tree chosen by the rooks for nest-building, and they shew a marvellous instinct in selecting the proper boughs and in placing the twigs. The young birds quickly gain the use of their wings, and a few days of difference may ruin the prospects of the rook-shooters. The young birds are easily distinguished when the shooting is in progress; the old birds meanwhile rising in the air out of reach. A few leaden pellets will pick them off; and he who handles them is mercifully warned regarding the vermin which covers them. As late as July the young crows—as big and black as their parents—may be seen in the fields, receiving lessons from them how and where to feed. Rooks have their special haunts and feeding-grounds, and observe certain rules which are handed down from generation to generation. Thousands of them will act in concert, and as if in obedience to a certain word of command.

We feel, in reading the descriptions of rabbits at play near the warren; of ferreting; how to secure a corn-crake in the mowing-grass; the description of a spaniel and hedgehog; of the snakes in the field, and the water-fowl by the lake, that the writer's sympathy with animate and inanimate nature is as close and sympathetic as that evinced by Gilbert White or the Banff Naturalist. The gambols of the rabbit afford him real pleasure to watch. He will tell you, if you wish to look for wild-flowers, that a much better place than the open field is the narrow uncultivated strip beside the hedge. There in season you may find the white convolvulus, the scarlet poppy with the black centre, and the pink pimpernel.

A walk across the downs, upon a green track which must have been a military road, carries our author, in imagination, to the time when the fierce Dane carried fire and slaughter inland, or to the time when the eagles and chariots of old Rome passed along it. With a crook to pull down the branches gradually without injuring them, we go a-nutting, and are told how to enjoy the full flavour of the fruit on the spot. Our friend has something to say about the bees in the garden, the haunts of the butterfly and the wasp, the toad and the fox. The snake loves the

dry sandy bank, crawling forth when bright weather comes; the female frequently deposits her eggs in a manure-heap near the farm-yard. When discovered by the mowers in the field they are killed without mercy; and they will go the length of telling you that if a man sleep in the fields with his mouth open, a snake will sometimes crawl down his throat! Snakes also get the credit of breaking and sucking eggs. Our author introduces us to all the varieties found in his neighbourhood, and assures us that a forked stick is best to catch them with, as it pins the head to the ground without injury.

Full as is our gossip companion of lore, connected with field and stream and copse, he gives us much pleasant insight to matters pertaining to indoor farm and village life in his southern county. Life there, we are told, moves on with but little variety from day to day, from year to year. Many home industries are nearly extinct in the village; still a few old women gather the stray flakes of wool after the sheep-washing in the brook, caught in a net spread for the purpose, and manufacture stout mops, which are readily enough bought by the farmers' wives. The wool is worked up by means of the ancient spinning-wheel. From the willow-trees of the brook, which are cut and split into flexible strips, ladies' work-baskets and endless nick-nacks are made. The making of hurdles for stopping gaps in fields, is another industry; but we are told that the master-carpenters in the large towns have undersold their village competitors. The wheelwright and the blacksmith are always busy. Besides the tinker, the cobbler has a good time of it too, the rough damp roads requiring a home-sewed boot to keep the feet dry. Gleaning in the fields in autumn, though it has declined much, is still practised. The cottagers, next to their gardens, love plenty of out-housing, and sheds where they may store wood, lumber, vegetables, &c., a fact which is sometimes forgotten when the modern labourer's cottage is built.

The descriptions given by the author of the older shepherds, remind us of the realism of Thomas Hardy in *Far from the Madding Crowd*. While more observant than the older labourer, the shepherd knows every field in the parish, the soil, and what weather suits it best. His books are the open fields and the hill-side. His knowledge and fidelity are chiefly put to the test in lambing-time. The modern greatcoat is now taking the place of the 'smock-frock' with him; while the aged men stump along the country road with their great umbrella slung over their shoulders with a piece of tar cord, and their staff projecting six or eight inches above the hand. The Lady-Day fair and the Michaelmas fair are the standard holidays of the farm maid-servants, affording a capital opportunity for the men and women of the neighbourhood to exchange the news and see the sights. Previous to Christmas, mumming, the singing of carols, and instrumental music, are often engaged in and practised.

Nathaniel Hawthorne would have found himself at home in the homestead of Wick Farm, which has been occupied by six or seven generations of the same family. Memories of the past have accumulated around it; covered with brown thatch it stands hidden and retired amongst trees, with cherry and pear against its wall of subdued

brick. The solid furniture within is stiff and angular; with quiet nooks and corners, and over all a suggestion of flowery peace and silence. The oaken cupboards contain a few pieces of old china. The lumber-room contains ancient carved oaken bedsteads; linen presses of black oak with carved panels; a rusty rapier, a flintlock pistol, and a yeomanry sabre which was used by the farmer in riding forth in the turbulent days. The parlour mantel-piece is always decorated with flowers in their season—in spring with boughs of horse-chestnuts, lilac, blue-bells, or wild hyacinths; in summer with nodding grasses, roses, and sweet-brier; while in autumn, two rosy apples may be seen gracing the shelf, and the corners of the looking-glass decorated with ripe wheat. In glass cases are preserved the various animals which may have been shot on the farm—two stuffed kingfishers, a polecat, a white blackbird; over the doorway there is a fox's head, and a badger's skin lies across the back of the arm-chair. The walls are adorned with two old hunting pictures, crudely and hardly executed.

The mistress of the house still observes the good old habit of baking; she can make all kinds of preserves, besides cowslip, elder-berry, and ginger wines. When the anxieties of harvest are over, the people of the farm can spare a day or two for the occasional picnics which take place while the sun is still warm and the sward dry. Although the farmer is independent of a landlord, he yet gives, by way of compliment, the first of the shooting to a neighbouring land-owner, and loses nothing by his liberality. From November until the end of January the farmer usually carries his double-barrelled gun, for a chance shot at ground-game or wild-fowl. About Christmas-time the traditional four-and-twenty blackbirds are shot, and baked in a pie; an apology for a social gathering, with cards and music. Some of the better-class farmers who keep hunters, ride constantly to the hounds; whilst the local steeple-chase, whither flock crowds of labouring people, is the most popular gathering of the year. And when the auctioneer is called in, as he is very frequently nowadays for the sale of lambs, young short-horns, or standing crops, a great dinner is prepared, at which sherry takes the place of ale.

The summer day begins very early at Wick Farm-house; at half-past two in the morning, the swallows begin to twitter faintly below the eaves; by three o'clock the cuckoo is calling from the meadows, and the mower is whetting his scythe while the day is cool and the dew on the grass. Between three and four the thrushes have begun to sing in the copse at the corner of the field; shortly afterwards may be heard the shoes of the milkers clattering in the court-yard; then their voices may be heard crying to the cows in the meadow, 'Coom up! Ya-hoop!' as they troop to the milking-place. The household breakfasts begin about half-past six; between eleven and twelve is luncheon-time; and dinner comes on about four o'clock. By six o'clock, work is over, the women having been allowed to leave the fields half an hour earlier, to prepare their husbands' supper.

The associations connected with a wagon are pleasantly described by our author; the child rides in it, as a treat, to the hayfield with his father; then the lad walks beside the leader, visiting the market-town for the first time; when

manhood arrives he takes command of the wagon; when he is married, it brings home his own furniture; and perhaps his own children in turn ride in it. When old and weak-kneed, it carries him in pity to the neighbouring town, and eventually may carry him to the churchyard on the hill.

The book, of which we have given but an imperfect sketch, is a most refreshing one to read. The author seems to combine the observant eye of Frank Buckland with the natural raciness of Gilbert White. Like his former work, the *Game-keeper at Home*, the present one is penned in a simple natural way, which carries the reader away into rural by-paths never before trodden by him.

THE DAY YOU'LL DO WITHOUT ME.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE day was full of the sweetness and light, the glory and warmth, that only summer can shed over and extract from the land. Down to the left of the verdure-covered old vicarage-house—where the chief action of the story I am relating took place—broad meadow-lands lay bathed in a purple haze—purple haze that spoke of intense heat in the open, and that made even the self-absorbed young pair under the trees on the lawn, grateful for the shelter afforded them. Any one who had seen them there would have seen the naturalness of such self-absorption, and at the same time have felt sorry for it. For though the dawning liking between them was 'natural,' it was not fit. The girl was the third daughter of a poor country parson, who eked out a slender professional income by taking pupils. The boy was the highly prized son of a noble house. And still they were allowed to be together!

The young fellow of seventeen, though he had not come to his full heritage of manly beauty yet, was a very worthy idol, so far as appearances went, for a young girl to set up and worship. He had the slender, clearly defined, delicate form and features that belong to the handsomest race in the world—the English aristocracy. There was a look of 'breed' about him that was unmistakable—that look that is never seen unless blood and culture have aided in producing it. What wonder, then, that May Baron contrasted him with the well-to-do young farmers in her father's parish; and having done that, erected an altar in her heart, whereon she worshipped Lionel Hastings unceasingly! She was supremely happy this morning, for her mother had given her a half-holiday to dispose of as she pleased. That excellent mother, on household cares intent, quite believed that she would go off for a stroll in the woods with some girl-friend, as it had been her wont to do from her childhood. But Lionel magnificently ordered her to 'stay and read poetry to him under the weeping-willow;' and she was only too pleased to obey him.

The sunbeams fell down like scattered gold through the leaves, fell down flickeringly on the two young heads; the boy's covered with crisp curls of dark-brown; the girl's crowned with such golden tresses as only fall to the lot of one woman in a thousand. The masculine head reposed comfortably on the boy's own folded arms. The feminine one was bent down over a volume—a collection of miscellaneous poetry—from which she was reading lines and verses at random.

'This is very jolly!' Lionel said languidly, for

the heat was subduing him. His only reason for speaking at all was that May had kept her violet eyes cast down on her book for a long time, and he liked to look at them often.

He had his 'taste's desire' at once. Without a moment's tantalising delay, she lifted her silken fringes obediently, and bent her honestly adoring gaze upon him, as she said sympathetically: 'Yes; isn't it? No lessons, and such sunshine!'

'And you so jolly pretty!' he cut in with a vast increase of energy. Then he withdrew one arm from under his head, and flung it round her slender waist; slender certainly, for though May was sixteen, she was symmetrically and perfectly formed. 'Now, you may go on reading,' the young sultan said, as May acknowledged his caress by saying: 'Oh, dear Lionel! A rosy colour flushed the girl's face. The thought that perhaps she ought not to let Lionel Hastings treat her as he might his sisters, crossed her mind, and clouded her happiness for an instant. Then in her purity and innocence, she blamed herself for even that thought, condemning it to herself as 'dreadful.' Then in her confusion she began reading at random, selecting by chance the very poem she ought not to have selected. It was an American poem, written by an anonymous author, and deserves to be more widely known than it is. One verse ran thus:

You call me true and tender names,
And gently twine my tresses;
And all the while my happy heart
Beats time to your caresses.
You love me in your tender way!
I answer as you let me;
But oh! there comes another day—
The day that you'll forget me!

Her voice had faltered more than once in the reading, and he had watched her confusion, and enjoyed it with half-laughing malice. Boy as he was, he knew so well what was in this young girl's heart. He thoroughly understood her sudden shame, and perfectly realised how keenly the dread that he might go away and forget her, cut May Baron.

'Look at me, pet!' he said with sudden authority.

'I—I am looking for something else to read,' she stammered.

'Look at me, and confess! Aren't you sorry you read those lines, because they describe your own situation and feelings to a certain degree?'

'Lionel, don't be so rude and cruel.'

He had taken her chin in his hand, and turned her face towards him. And she knew that her face was telling the truth, that she loved him much! 'My own pet!' he said, more softly and seriously, 'I shall never go away and forget you—trust me for that.' Then he reared himself up, and kissed the little face that was rich with happy blushes now; and May was well content to believe him. 'I shall have you painted by Millais,' he said presently, lying back and regarding her critically.

'Shall you!' She was alight with pleasure at the way in which he was assuming the right to direct her and manage for her in the future. 'Who is Millais? Is he any one I ought to know about?'

'He's one of the greatest painters alive,' he said

with reproving gravity. 'I don't know that I shouldn't put him at the top of the list of English painters, if it weren't for Leighton's conflicting claims. Of course you ought to know about him, pet; only, how should you know about any one while you're kept cooped up here!' Then he went on to tell her that Millais had painted his two sisters, both of whom were great beauties and celebrated belles, and both of whom were married to peers of the realm. 'They were the youngest brides of their respective seasons,' he added. 'Ida was only sixteen.'

'Sixteen! my age!' she exclaimed in astonishment.

'Yes, by Jove! you *are* sixteen. But my sister Ida looked much more of a woman. She had no end of offers; but my mother knew that St John would come on at the end of the season, so she kept Ida free.'

'It was lucky your sister Ida didn't care for any of the others,' she suggested timidly.

'She did though. She was an awful goose about a fellow called Bartie Friel; but he hadn't the needful. The best of it is that he's St John's cousin, and introduced St John to Ida. He thought'—the boy paused, and laughed lightly at the absurdity of it—that Ida would win old St John's liking, and get him to give Bartie something good; but Ida won something more than old St John's liking—she won the title and coronet.'

'And his heart?'

'His heart! I don't know about that; he's popularly supposed to have lost his heart thirty years ago to my mother.'

'Then he must be quite old?' May questioned in angry surprise. 'Tell me, Lionel, is he quite old and gray?'

'Of course he is. He's fifty, and Ida's eighteen.'

'Poor thing!' May ejaculated with honest pity.

'Very few people speak of Lady St John as "poor thing," I can tell you,' he said, laughing. 'She's the leader of about the best *coterie* in London.'

'Poor Mr Friel then,' she then said softly.

The boy's face clouded. 'Bartie Friel is'—He stopped himself abruptly.

And she asked with interest: 'Is what?'

'Never mind; I can't tell you, pet. Something you ought not to hear till you're a fashionable lady,' he added half sneeringly; then he ended by saying: 'He's not half such a good fellow as old St John after all.'

They were summoned to luncheon soon after this; and May went in dreamily, her head being full of faint outlines of the romances in real life of which Lionel's sister Ida was the heroine.

The dining-room of the picturesque vicarage was as dreary an apartment as drab furniture and dingy papered walls could make it. Nature had done a great deal for the room, by throwing garlands of blush-roses and French honeysuckle across the lattice-windows; and through these floral shades the sunbeams fell in the dancing, graceful way in which sunbeams do play through leaves. But alas! all beauty and grace came to an end here. The coarse, crude, time-worn, children-torn furniture could not be beautified even by the sunbeams. We are so apt to accuse the mistress of a house of 'want of taste,' if her surroundings are ugly and stiff and soiled. But how can a woman with an empty purse and full hands drape

windows artistically, and polish up her household gods perpetually? Poor Mrs Baron most certainly had not solved the difficult problem of how this was to be done. She had seen things fade and grow more and more dilapidated year by year, and she had made strenuous efforts to repair them. But repairing is not replacing, and things had been meagre even at the beginning; so now it was but a small wonder that an air of dull though decent poverty should reign over everything inside the house.

It may be asked: 'But with daughters who were grown up, should the taste of beautifying, or of attempting to beautify, have been left to the already over-worked mother and manager?' The answer is simple enough. The two elder girls were wearing their way through the world as governesses. And May's education was incomplete, she being only sixteen. Truth to tell, May had never troubled her handsome little head about any of these shortcomings of her home, before this awakening day. But now when she sat down to luncheon, something about the arrangement of the table, something about the dinginess of the room, struck her as being sordid and utterly inharmonious; utterly out of keeping with the refinement that surrounded Lionel Hastings like an atmosphere.

Her meditations on this subject were put to flight abruptly. Her father spoke in agitated tones—tones which the poor wife knew so well portended fresh anxieties, fresh struggles, fresh combats with poverty. 'Lionel, I have had a letter from Lady Hastings this morning; she thinks that the sooner you go to Oxford the better.' Mr Baron's voice trembled very obviously. Lionel's 'going to Oxford' meant the direct loss of three hundred a year to the poor over-wrought vicar of Balton.

It is needless to recapitulate here all that was thought and felt and said, after the key-note of separation had been struck. In the midst of the boy's natural delight at the proposed change, there was a pang of regret at the idea of parting with May. Pleasure and sorrow were delicately blended in his heart, and they filled the situation with emotional interest. But in May's heart it was all pure sorrow, unmixed with any pleasurable sensation at all. He was leaving her, going to Oxford; going to be 'a man,' going to 'begin life;' and in these facts he found compensation for leaving her. But she only felt that she was losing him! For her, there was no compensation either in the present or the future. Lionel was going away! With the bashfulness of a girl's first love, she never once thought of censuring him ever so slightly for not feeling this approaching separation painfully, as she felt it. It was natural, she told herself, that boys should long for and revel in the commencement of their emancipation from the trammels of their boyhood. Especially was it natural that Lionel should do so. Light as her father's rule over the lad was, still it was *rule*, and Lionel was born to be 'free,' if ever human being was so. Thus she reasoned and argued against her regret at his going, and went on regretting it just the same. The positive difference which would be necessitated in the household arrangements by the loss of that sum, which Lionel represented to her mother, never occurred to her. She was too young and loving and

thoughtless to cumber herself with domestic cares, or take thought for the morrow of domestic life.

It did not occur to Lionel that he ought to say something more definite than he had said to the girl, whose whole horizon was darkened by the thoughts of his departure. He had meant loyally and lovingly; and so, when he kissed her on the lips, and put a little gold ring on her finger, he thought he had done all that was needful. When the time came for him to marry—fellows of his 'order' married early—he should marry May, of course. Meantime it was useless to talk about it. And May relied unconsciously upon the fidelity he did *not* plead; but still, thought far more impatiently about that 'meanwhile' than he did.

At last the day came for them to say good-bye, and the boy went out into the world; when a thousand fresh interests sprang up like flowers in his path, making it beautiful. And May went about the old vicarage-house and grounds as of old, and found the days very long and eventless, now that there was no Lionel to brighten them.

Lady Hastings wrote a courteous letter to Mr Baron, thanking him for the care and attention he had bestowed upon her son. And Lionel himself wrote a nice note to May during his first term—a note which May prized next to her twisted gold ring; though there was little in it save an account of his feats on the river, and of the prowess of a certain well-pedigreed bull-dog pup. She answered it with all the frank confidence of a child—all the hearty, loving sympathy of a woman. And then it ended.

Gradually the old vicarage-house and all the occupants of it faded from his mind. Life was full of bright promise for him, and he had no time to look back. He finished his college career with more than credit. He was a touch more than clever, and his impetuosity stood him in stead of perseverance, and carried him well on the road he had chosen. By the time he was five-and-twenty he had done such good service to government by the subtlety, skill, and energy with which he had carried through a delicate negotiation abroad, that government recognised his claims munificently, and gave him an important and highly salaried home appointment. In fact Lionel Hastings had made his mark, and the mothers of daughters regarded him kindly.

The years had flown with him, the eight years that had passed since he had said good-bye to May Baron, and promised never to forget her. But they had not flown with her.

THE INNS OF COURT.

THE four Inns of Court—that is to say, Lincoln's Inn, the Middle Temple, the Inner Temple, and Gray's Inn—combine to form what is in fact the legal university of England—if by the word university we may imply an examining body which has framed specific regulations for the admission of students, the 'keeping of terms,' the conduct of examinations, and the granting of degrees. Of the history of the Inns it is not our purpose to write; and on that subject indeed, very little could be said within the limits of a magazine article; but we may perhaps effect a useful end if we confine ourselves to roughly sketching the process by which a layman becomes a barrister.

Firstly, then, it has been decided that every person, not otherwise disqualified, who has passed a public examination at any university within the British dominions, is entitled to be admitted as a student of any of the four Inns of Court without passing a preliminary examination; but no attorney-at-law, solicitor, writer to the signet, or writer of the Scotch courts, proctor, notary-public, clerk in Chancery, and certain other professional men, shall be admitted as a student at any Inn of Court until such person shall have entirely and *bonâ fide* ceased to act or practise in any of the capacities above named or described; and if on the rolls of any court, shall have taken his name off the rolls thereof. The Society of Lincoln's Inn also requires that the candidate shall not be a person who is in trade; and a declaration to the effect must be signed before further progress can be made. The aspirant then signs and delivers to the steward or treasurer of the Inn a formal statement of his wish to be admitted as a student; paying for the form on which he makes such statement the sum of one guinea; and the declaration of fitness must be vouched for by two barristers, and approved of by the Treasurer or by two Benchers of the Inn. Supposing the candidate never to have passed a public examination at any British university, he must forthwith present himself before the Board of Examiners appointed by the four Inns, and demonstrate to their satisfaction, both by writing and *vivâ voce* if necessary, that he possesses a competent knowledge of the English and Latin languages and of English history.

Having passed his examination, the candidate is admitted, and pays five guineas for the right of attending during his studentship the lectures of four professors appointed by the Council. He also pays other sums, which vary at each Inn. If he become a member of Lincoln's Inn, these include a 'fine' of eight pounds eleven and sixpence on admission, twenty-five pounds two and sixpence for stamps on admission, and one hundred pounds as a deposit, to be returned on call to the Bar or on leaving the Inn, on payment of all arrears of commons, &c. The last payment may be avoided by the execution by third parties of a bond for the amount; but as the fees on call come to nearly as much, there is but little to choose between the two methods, for sooner or later, a hundred pounds must be paid. These are necessary disbursements; but they do not by any means represent the total expense to which the student renders himself liable; for, except for the mere grains of legal instruction he may obtain at the public lectures of the four professors of Jurisprudence, Common Law, Equity, and the Law of Real and Personal Property, he has not yet contracted for his technical education. Still, it should be noted that no one need go either to lectures or to chambers unless he thinks fit; and that so long as the student is able to pass his examinations previous to call, he may obtain his knowledge from whatever source is most convenient to him. He must, however, in all cases pay the lecture-fee of five guineas.

So much for the process by which a man may educationally qualify himself for the final examination and call to the Bar! Even more important is the process of formal qualification. Who has not heard of the ordeal of 'eating dinners?' To him who would be a barrister, food for the

body is as necessary as food for the mind; but while the Council of Legal Education cares not whence the mental pabulum is derived, it most strictly exacts that at least a certain amount of the physical dietary must be partaken of within the Hall of the Inn to which the student is attached. The inexorable regulations prescribe that, with insignificant exceptions, 'every student shall have kept twelve terms before being called to the Bar.' The rule might have been made by Epicurus, for it means in plain language that no student shall be called to the Bar until he has eaten a certain number of dinners at his Inn. In the case of members of an English, Scotch, or Irish university, this necessary number is three per term; and in that of other students, six; so that the miserable man who, not being affiliated to a university, would aspire to be a barrister, must first eat no fewer than seventy-two dinners, as served for him by an unsympathetic cook.

Of these dinners a volume might be written, nay, two—one of complaints and one of praises. At Lincoln's Inn, the huge Hall is traversed at the north end by a table, at which dine the Benchers in august state, separated from the vulgar crowd of barristers and students by an array of sideboards. Then, also running from east to west, are two tables dedicated to the *apprenticci*, or barristers aforesaid; and lastly, running from north to south, are several tables for students. Dinner is at half-past five on week-days, and at five on Sundays; and about ten minutes before dinner-time the Hall begins to fill. As the student or barrister enters by the south door, he is received in the lobby by a servant, who relieves him of his stick and coat, and by another who robes him in a gown, the property of the Inn. In the Hall he probably finds a friend or two, with whom he arranges to 'make a mess'; that is to say, to dine, or as others phrase it, 'to make a table'; and with them he stands talking with his hat on, until, as the clock strikes, the head-butler solemnly marches to the west end of the long sideboard, and by means of three blows of a hammer, exhorts to comparative silence. 'Making a table' consists in four men agreeing to dine together and taking possession of two places on each side of one of the long 'boards'; the four sets of knives and forks thus forming a square. At the students' tables, he who sits at the north-west corner is captain of the mess, and in him is the right of deciding what wine shall be drunk by himself and his friends, unless some one chooses to ask for port, in which case port must be brought. Otherwise, on ordinary occasions the choice lies between two bottles of *vin ordinaire*—and very *ordinaire* it is—or one bottle of good claret, or one bottle of sherry between the four, beer *ad libitum* being forthcoming as well.

Dinner is seldom quite punctual; but in due course the head-butler goes again to the sideboard, and with great *empresement* announces: 'Benchers, gentlemen!' whereupon every one in Hall respectfully rises. The dons enter, in Indian file unless guests are present, by the north door, bowing as they come; and then all remain standing for a minute until the head-butler once more raises his voice and cries: 'Silence, gentlemen, if you please.' This is the signal for the chaplain to ask a blessing. Forthwith every knife and fork begins operations, unless, of course, there be soup,

in which case the man sitting on the left of the captain of the mess helps himself first, and then passes the ladle to the right. The same plan is pursued with fish. But for the captain himself is reserved the privilege of first cutting the joint which follows, and of then passing it on, always to the right. A butler has meanwhile placed the wine on the table; and he who sits on the captain's right is the first to taste it, as also he is the first to partake of the dish—generally a fruit-tart—which succeeds the joint.

The method in which the wine should be passed is somewhat complex, and there are, we imagine, but few students who clearly understand how it should be done. One rule, however, it is advisable to remember. As a man hands the decanter to his neighbour for the first time, 'he begs to be allowed the honour of taking wine with him;' and the omission of this custom is the infallible sign of a freshman. But all the Inns—and Lincoln's Inn especially—are nests of venerable customs, the propriety and the antiquity of which may not be disputed; and though fines for non-observance of them are no longer the fashion, they still exist, and will doubtless continue to flourish.

One night in each term is called Grand Night; and on that occasion a somewhat better dinner than usual is provided, and guests—usually legal and political celebrities invited irrespective of party—dine with the Benchers, who, if there be any truth in rumour, not only 'fare sumptuously every day,' but absolutely 'aldermanise' on these festivals. For their banquet they pay nothing; barristers paying half-a-crown; and students a guinea for the first six in each term, and two shillings per dinner afterwards; and in all cases wine is included.

Dinner over, the head-butler again implores silence, and the chaplain says grace, releasing the students, who immediately depart, but causing no emotion in the Benchers and barristers, who still sit at their leisure. The interval between the blessing and the grace is usually an hour; but after the great body of students has departed, two or three usually remain 'to be introduced to the Bar-table,' in accordance with the special regulation of the society, which exacts that 'no student can be called to the Bar who has not been three times introduced to the Bar-table after dinner, once in each of three different terms; and one of such introductions is to be in the last year before his call to the Bar.' The ordeal is not very trying; for it principally consists in the student walking rapidly between the two Bar-tables, whereat sit some fifty inattentive or preoccupied legal luminaries; but before undergoing it, he has to renew his declaration that he does not fill any disqualifying office, and to certify that he is not in trade.

The necessary expenses previous to call are at Lincoln's Inn something like one hundred and fifty pounds. At the other Inns the total is, we believe, generally less, amounting to about one hundred and twenty pounds. Further expenditure on books, &c. may very easily raise the cost of being called to the Bar to three hundred pounds; a sum exclusive of the cost of living during the twelve terms which have to be kept. Yet the Inns are crowded with students, and never, probably, were so many men called to the Bar

in one year as during 1878. Legal business is always increasing, and it is an undoubted fact that, as the practice is simplified, so the number of cases, both litigious and otherwise, grows proportionately greater. We have no longer many of those old family Chancery suits which bled our grandfathers to death; but by way of compensation, we find that nowadays nearly every man who will 'have the law' on his neighbour, has dealings with a solicitor, and through him with a barrister. For every one, save for barristers and their providers, the question is so serious a one, that our advice to all who are litigiously disposed is—think twice before 'going to law.'

INDIAN SNAKE-STORIES.

I WAS a passenger on board the Peninsular and Oriental steamer *Medina*; one among several young fellows who had started in various capacities on our 'trial trip' to India. We had encountered some rather rough weather after quitting the Red Sea, but that was all over; we had had favouring gales for several days, and were now within twenty-four hours or so of Bombay. Our promised land was almost in view; we were full of its many and varied attractions; all the dark colours had vanished from our picture, and our imaginations were kindled by the recollection of all we had read and heard; and we longed to realise for ourselves the new and strange experiences which we hoped were in store for us. India and Indian matters were now the staple topics of conversation; those going out for the first time were eagerly seeking information on many points from the 'old stagers' among their fellow-passengers; and some of these worthies were a little inclined to improve the opportunity, and treat the 'griffins'—as the new-comers are usually called—to not a few travellers' tales. For my own part, I had made several good friends among the old Anglo-Indians on board, had learned much from them of practical importance to myself, and had listened to many a capital anecdote on matters relating to social life, and to hunting and travelling experiences.

It was our last evening but one in the *Medina*, and a group of us were sitting on deck after dinner, enjoying the pleasant light breeze that was blowing, chatting over the various incidents of the voyage, and discussing the probabilities and possibilities that awaited some among us in our new home. Elephant-hunting and tiger-shooting were passed in review; and some anecdotes of rather a thrilling nature were related.

'The big game are getting very much shot down,' remarked an old Judge, who had been many years out. 'Tigers are quite scarce now, compared with what they used to be. In fact it is becoming rather difficult to find them.'

'All the better too,' replied a fat good-natured little man, Dr Beamish. 'The existence of tigers is only desirable to a parcel of idle sportsmen, and it is to be hoped they will gradually be exterminated or nearly so. The rewards offered

by government have done much to effect this; and I hope the time is not far off when one may take an evening stroll without the risk of being carried off to form the supper of a family of hungry cubs.

'I don't think tigers are the chief objection to an evening stroll,' said Mr Barry, a civilian of some standing in the Bombay Presidency. 'I can't say I ever encountered one myself, unless I went specially to look for it. Except those horrid brutes the man-eaters, who stick at nothing, a tiger will generally keep out of your way if you keep out of his. The snakes are the real obstacle to a comfortable walk. There is something peculiarly disagreeable in the idea of kicking what looks like a bit of wood out of your way, and getting in return a small prick from a cobra, which leaves you a dead man an hour or two afterwards.'

'Ay, a good deal sooner than that, sometimes,' observed Dr Beamish, nodding his head. 'A few years ago our regiment was going from one station to another, and one morning we were marching before daylight, when a native servant, who was very near me, uttered an exclamation of pain, and put his hand down to his foot. I asked him what was amiss, and he replied that a thorn had gone into his foot, and was hurting him badly, and making him feel sick. He staggered as he spoke; and bidding him sit down, I called for a light, and bent down to examine the place, and try to extract the thorn. Not many minutes had elapsed, but the man was now very faint and unable to support himself, so I strongly suspected it was something more than he fancied. A moment's inspection shewed me two tiny punctures like stings; a small livid ring was already forming round the place, and I became seriously alarmed for the poor fellow, for what he had imagined to be the prick of a thorn, was the bite of a deadly snake. Excision of the part, and brandy and other restoratives were immediately administered; but all to no purpose; the poor man was a corpse in less than an hour from the time he had been bitten.'

'How horrible!' was the general exclamation.

'It must be a most deadly poison to act so rapidly,' said a gentleman who stood near the doctor. 'Has no antidote ever been discovered to counteract it?'

'None that can be relied on,' replied Dr Beamish. 'The bite of the cobra da capello is certain death to the unfortunate victim; and that within a very short space of time. I have known many instances of individuals having been bitten, and heard of many more; but I never encountered a case in which the sufferer recovered from the effects of the poison, though I have heard of such a thing having occurred among the natives.'

'You mean by the application of the snake-stones?' suggested the Judge.

'Yes; I have certainly heard of some apparently well-authenticated cases of cures having been effected by them; but never having witnessed one, I cannot say what amount of reliance may be placed on such statements.'

'Snake-stones—what are they? Where are they found?' inquired one or two of the listeners around.

'They are manufactured in various places,' said

the doctor; 'and I have seen them, though I never happened to see them employed. Their native name is Pamboo-kaloo; and they are small dark substances, very light and porous in texture, their power of absorption being very remarkable. In calling them stones we merely use the customary expression, for they are not really stones, but are in reality small pieces of charred bone.'

'Do the natives carry them about as charms, or how do they apply them?' asked a young assistant-surgeon, who had been listening very attentively.

'They do not seem to have any power of averting snake-bites, so are not considered as charms in the ordinary sense,' replied Dr Beamish. 'When a native has been bitten, and a snake-stone is at hand, the limb is bandaged very tightly above the place, and the stone is applied to the wound, to which it at first adheres closely, and then drops off of its own accord. It has then apparently drawn out all the poison, and the patient is supposed to be cured. This at least is what I have been told; but the efficacy of the so-called cure is quite another matter.'

'It is what I have often been told too,' observed the Judge; 'and I remember seeing a man in my district who was said to have been bitten by a cobra, and had been cured by the application of one of these so-called stones. But I am inclined to think there is a good deal of chance in the matter. Perfect faith in the virtue of the stone may go a long way in assisting the cure; and of course we only hear of the successful cases, never of the failures.'

'That is true,' replied the doctor; 'and there is besides no special quality in the 'stone' itself that can be ascertained, for they have been frequently subjected to very careful analysis, and as I said, have turned out to be nothing more mysterious than a piece of charred bone, afterwards shaped and polished. At least that is all we can tell about them; and they certainly hold no place among the remedies employed by medical men.'

'In fact, doctor, there is no remedy for the bite of a snake so good as keeping out of its way; prevention better than cure, eh?' remarked a cheery old merchant, on his way back to the North-west Provinces.

'No doubt of that, Mr Roberts; but unluckily we can't always manage to keep out of the way of snakes; I only wish we could. Why, I could tell you a dozen instances of their being found in the most unlikely places, and of several most providential escapes from being bitten. A brother-officer of mine, who was with his regiment on the line of march, slept every night on a low *charpoy* or camp-bed in a corner of his tent, which was curtained round, but of course rather loose in its construction. His servant's entrance one morning disturbed a snake, which rapidly slipped from the bed, and made off through an aperture in the tent. Another servant on the outside perceived it, and killed it instantly by a blow from a switch which he chanced to have in his hand. It proved to be a cobra, three and a half feet long; and my friend's thankfulness for his escape may be imagined when he discovered on an examination of his bed that the deadly reptile had been lying coiled up within a few inches of his head, the round indentation on the pillow being plainly visible; while he recollected

having felt a slight sensation of movement once or twice, which luckily for himself he had been too drowsy to notice further.

'Come now, doctor! is that a fact?' said old Mr Roberts, shaking his head doubtfully. 'They say misfortune makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows, but a cobra would stagger most people.'

'It's a fact all the same,' rejoined the doctor, oracularly. 'Bless you! if that surprises you, I'll tell you one or two more; and then I'll call on the Judge, who I know has *one* at least of a nature to make your hair curl, for I've heard him tell it. Well then, I was assisting once at a *burra-khanna* or big dinner-party, and we had all been extremely vivacious. At last the ladies rose to depart; when just past the muslin skirts of a very pretty girl who had been my right-hand neighbour, there glided a cobra, which forthwith made for the open window behind us; but was attacked and killed before it could escape. The young lady, not unnaturally, got rather hysterical; but she soon came round, and then told us what, considering all the circumstances there was not the slightest reason to disbelieve, that during the progress of the dinner her foot had on several different occasions touched a soft object, which once or twice moved slightly, but which she concluded to be a pet dog belonging to the master of the house, which she knew to be perfectly quiet and good-tempered. The dog, however, had not been in the room at all; and the object she had touched had undoubtedly been the coiled-up snake, whose bite would have been speedily fatal to the poor girl, who little guessed the awful risk she had so narrowly escaped.'

Various ejaculations followed this anecdote. 'Now really, doctor!' from Mr Roberts.

'Solemn fact, my dear sir,' replied Dr Beamish. 'I saw the thing happen with my own eyes, and by no means omitted to reflect that the young lady sat next to me, and the calf of my leg was not far off, and might have come handy, as an Irishman would say.'

'Now for one other anecdote, and then perhaps the Judge will kindly follow suit. One of our sergeants' wives had a little boy of about a year old. The child was asleep one day in a wicker cradle, over which his mother had spread a light chintz quilt, to protect the infant from the flies. She was engaged in some household matters in the next room, quite assured of the boy's safety, as she was close at hand, and could hear his slightest movement. Some cause or other took her into the apartment where the child lay; and glancing at the cradle, she beheld a terrible sight. The infant lay in a deep and tranquil slumber; but at the foot of the cradle, coiled up on the quilt, was a snake, which the least motion of the child might at any moment disturb and irritate, when the most frightful result would probably follow. Knowing herself to be powerless for good, the poor mother cast an agonised look on her sleeping babe, and with trembling limbs slipped from the room and rushed to the place where she knew she should find her husband. In a moment he had decided what to do; and seizing some implement with a forked extremity, he followed his wife back to the house. Stepping softly up to the cradle, with one swift movement he dexterously twitched the deadly reptile from the spot where it lay, and with a well-aimed blow killed it on the ground

where it fell. Nothing like presence of mind on such occasions; no time for deliberation with cobras. Now I think I have pretty well done my share of the talking, and harrowed your feelings up to the proper pitch for the Judge's story.'

The worthy Judge thus appealed to, cleared his throat, and looking round the group, which had by this time become considerably larger than at first, he observed with a smile: 'Upon my word, we look for all the world like a circle of natives listening to one of their story-tellers. I don't know that I feel up to the subject; the doctor has taken me quite at a disadvantage. Men with his powers of narration should have mercy on their less highly gifted neighbours. I am sure you can tell the story far better yourself, doctor.'

'Time about is fair-play, Judge,' replied the doctor jocosely. 'You were an eye-witness; I was not.'

'Well, well,' said the Judge; 'I suppose I must try. Once upon a time then—to begin like the old fairy tales—I was a smart young fellow, like a good many of you here; and I was lucky enough to obtain a Civil appointment, which was a very good thing in those days, and isn't a bad thing now, let me tell you. My father had an old friend, a civilian, who lived in Bombay; and when I landed, I found a very cordial invitation awaiting me to go to this gentleman's house, and stay as long as suited my convenience. A most worthy, kind, and hospitable old gentleman he was; nobody could have been a more sincere friend; he would have gone miles to do any one he liked a service. He had one special fault however, or weakness we may rather call it—he was very fond of practical joking.'

'A most detestable vice, if you'll excuse bad language,' interpolated the doctor.

'It is indeed,' resumed the Judge; 'and I trust none of our young friends here will ever be guilty of it, for it is neither clever nor gentlemanly. My friend Mr Gordon was a gentleman however; but in those days more latitude in manners was permitted; such things would not be tolerated now. In addition to various foolish little tricks which Mr Gordon was fond of playing off upon his guests, especially upon the "griffs," he had one favourite joke, which had become a constant habit with him, so that he rarely encountered a new-comer without perpetrating it, if the opportunity offered. This was to pick up a stick, bit of matting, or rope, or anything that came handy, and throw it against the person he wished to startle, at the same time exclaiming: "A snake!" Some of them merely smiled and took no further notice; others perhaps started and looked uneasy for a moment, and this delighted the old gentleman; while a few were found who were visibly annoyed, and did not see the joke at all. It was certainly a very weak one. However, he seemed to find it entertaining, for he constantly perpetrated it, till he one day received a lesson, which undoubtedly cured him of that trick, and I think of a good many others.'

'He was walking in his compound or garden one afternoon with two or three friends. I was there too, and with me was one of the young men who had come out at the same time as myself, and who had called that day to see me, and had been hospitably invited to remain to

tiffin. He and I were strolling about by ourselves, when the course of our walk brought us close to the spot where Mr Gordon and his friends were chatting. In a moment the old gentleman stooped down to a little tuft of herbage beside him, seized what looked like a small stick or bit of branch, and flung it against my friend Mr Ashley, saying quickly: "There's a snake!" I had heard this so often now that I did not even smile, but just glanced at Ashley with a look meant to say: "Never mind; it's only his little joke!" My eye fell on his bent arm, where the object thrown by Mr Gordon had alighted; it had not fallen off, but had remained there. That moment it began to move; and with a sensation of horror, which to my dying day I can never forget, I saw the reared head and small bright eyes of a krait, one of the most poisonous snakes in India! Its bite was all but certain death, and that in a very short time. "Stand still!" I cried in an agony. "Do not stir, Ashley, as you value your life!" One glance, and the brave young fellow comprehended the situation. The snake was now slowly curling itself about his shoulder. If he shuddered, I never saw it; indeed my eyes were riveted upon the horrid spectacle, and I prayed as I had never done before, that this most terrible fate might be averted from my poor friend. Just one glance I ventured at Mr Gordon, who with his friends had turned round on hearing my exclamations, and stood silently by, still as the grave, hardly daring to breathe. The poor old gentleman was piteous to see. His face was pale as death, his eyes almost starting from his head, great drops of perspiration stood on his forehead. "Mercy! O God, mercy!" I heard him once faintly murmur.

'You must remember that all this occurred in less than a minute, in far less time than I have taken to tell it. But what an age it seemed! And if it felt so to me, what must it have been to the poor fellow who knew that his only chance was to remain perfectly still! He did so. He stood as if he were made of stone, never moving even a muscle. The snake crawled round his neck and shoulders, reared itself for a moment against his head, and again I saw its horrid glittering eyes. Once more it curled itself round his arm, and then, after a moment's pause, it glided down his leg to the ground, and rapidly made off in the direction of a hedge not far off, where we did not attempt to pursue it, being only too relieved by its disappearance. "Thank God! you're safe. Oh, thank God for it!" said Mr Gordon, rushing up to young Ashley, and seizing him warmly by the hand. "My dear young fellow, can you ever forgive me? for I never, never can forgive myself! One thing, however, I am cured. Never from this day forward shall I do such a senseless idiotic thing again—never, never!" "Perhaps it will be as well sir," replied Ashley with a faint attempt at a smile; but the next instant he fainted. The strain had been tremendous; and it was a good while before he came round. He was not ultimately the worse for his fright however, and the incident proved greatly to his advantage; for he found a staunch friend in Mr Gordon, who never forgot the peril to which he had exposed the young man, and did all in his power to assist him in his profession, of which he afterwards became a very successful and

leading member. And so ends my contribution to the evening's entertainment.' Whereupon the worthy Judge leaned back in his deck-chair with an expression of considerable relief, and waved his hand in a deprecating manner, in reply to the thanks he received from the circle who had been listening to him.

'Story-telling is like eating; it only wants a beginning,' observed Dr Beamish cheerfully. 'I knew the Judge would come nobly out of the difficulty; and I see Mr Barry there has an anecdote at the tip of his tongue. Let us have it, my dear sir, by all means.'

'Curiously enough,' said Mr Barry, 'that story of the Judge's reminded me of a case that happened many years ago in my district. I did not see the occurrence myself; but a man who did told me about it, and in fact the thing was perfectly well known. It took place at a dinner-party or social gathering of some kind. A lady sat down to the piano, and had just begun to play, when some one chanced to look at the leg of the music-stool on which she was seated, and perceived something moving there. A closer inspection shewed that the moving object was a snake, one of a most venomous species. It had been closely coiled round the spiral leg of the stool; and when the poor lady unconsciously seated herself in its vicinity, it had been disturbed, and immediately began to move. She was quickly warned of her great danger, and urged to sit perfectly still, which she very heroically did, not stirring hand or foot, or uttering a cry. It must have been a fearfully trying ordeal for the poor thing, as there was no telling what course of action the snake might pursue. However, in this case it never touched her at all; but after curling round and round the music-stool for half a minute or so, it dropped on the floor, and was killed before it could effect its escape.'

'How excessively unpleasant!' said a young fellow; one of those, like myself, new to Indian life and experiences. 'Why, the horrid reptiles seem to meet you at every turn! Is no place safe from them?'

'Don't be alarmed, my dear sir,' replied the doctor easily; 'the snakes are not so frequently encountered after all, the poisonous ones at least. And though it is unhappily the case that thousands of people, chiefly natives, lose their lives by snakes, there are at the same time numberless instances in which those who have been bitten by the less dangerous species have recovered, and in fact suffered little or no uneasiness. There are plenty of harmless snakes, but you are not sure which are which, for a time. The stories you have been hearing are what we may call "special cases."'

Among the group that had formed on the deck was an Indian chaplain, who had been listening to all that had gone on, but had not hitherto taken any active part in it.

'If you will allow me,' he now observed, 'I will tell you a very curious and melancholy incident that happened on one occasion in a church where I was conducting the service. The windows and doors were of course all wide open, and through one of those open doors a cobra glided into the church. I did not notice it myself, but several of the congregation did, and were not unreasonably much alarmed. The beadle, a native, was fortunately

on the alert ; and he managed to procure a tulwar, with which he cut off the creature's head before it had time to do any mischief. Tranquillity was restored, and the service proceeded to its close, when many of the congregation went to look at the dead snake as it lay headless on the ground. Among them was a man who, in his curiosity to examine the reptile, put his foot on the head and rolled it towards him ; when he instantly uttered a loud exclamation and drew his foot away. By some means or other, he had contrived to set in action the muscular apparatus attached to the poison-fangs, which had darted violently forward and struck him on the foot. All remedies were useless : in half an hour the poor fellow was a corpse ; proving, with a vengeance, the awful virulence of the poison of the cobra da capello !'

This was our last anecdote. It was getting late, darkness was setting in, and it was about the time when the Judge, the doctor, and some of the others were in the habit of turning in for a nightly rubber of whist. An adjournment was made therefore by most of the party to the cabin, Dr Beamish bringing up the rear with the chaplain.

'Very curious incident that you have just related, Mr Lane,' I heard him say, as he descended the stairs ; 'I must really make a note of it.'

'Yes,' calmly replied the chaplain, 'but nevertheless terribly true.'

[Our readers will be startled to learn that according to a return published in January 1878, no fewer than twenty-two thousand human beings lost their lives in India during the previous year, by snake-bites ! This lamentable sacrifice of life is occasioned not only by the cobra and krait, but by other deadly species, and notably by a snake, barely a foot long, the *Echis carinata*, known also by the name of Kupper or Foorsa.

The effects produced by snake-bite vary according to the species. Thus, the bite of the cobra produces coma and speedy death, whereas the poison of others, such as Russell's viper, produces excessive pain, convulsions, and usually death. The bite of *Echis carinata* causes blood to ooze from the pores of the victim, who, after lingering for a week or more, succumbs to the fatal poison.

The number of harmless snakes is enormously in excess of the venomous species, else the mortality would unquestionably be greater even than it is ; and it is to be deplored that more strenuous measures are not taken to eradicate, as far as possible, a tribe of animals so deadly to man.—Ed.]

THE TWO SEXES.

THE following pointed observations, which appear in the *American Socialist*, may be quoted in confirmation of the views we have propounded in the article Fashionable Vagaries, in a recent number of the *Journal*.

'As to the question of the sexes, I think that woman's love of dress is the stamp of her inferiority. It ends the discussion with me. I can't respect my sex as I do the other while we are such creatures of dress. Here a man and his wife are projecting a journey. The man is equipped in an hour, and his attention is free for the higher considerations of the occasion ; but the woman must have a week for her preparations,

and starts off fagged out with shopping, and dress-making, and packing. Go to Wilhelmj's concert. The gentlemen performers are not distinguished at all by their dress, unless it is by its simplicity. Wilhelmj's black coat is buttoned across his breast up to his collar, and his wristbands are quite inconspicuous. But the lady singer comes in dragging a peacock's tail unspreed, and tattooed from head to foot with colours, and frills, and embroidery. What is a wedding to a woman ? It is a bride's satins, and laces, and jewels. The sentiment of the circumstance is all smothered in dress. She can neither feel solemn nor gay—she is a spectacle of clothes. You bring me Scripture for her relief : "Can a maid forget her ornament, or a bride her attire ?" I don't say she can any more than a leopard can change his spots ; I only say it is something which stamps her inferiority.

'If you quote revelation, I will quote nature. According to nature, man should be apparelled in brighter colours and with more fanciful decoration than woman, and should think more of his appearance. See the peacock, and gobbler, and rooster, and the male birds generally. The lion cultivates a flowing mane, but the lioness wears her hair as meek as a Methodist. The human female seems to have lost her natural prestige, and is fain to make herself attractive in meretricious ways.

'Imagine a man compressing his ribs with stays, or trammelling his legs with skirts ; let alone swathing them after the mummy fashion of to-day. Imagine him spending an hour every morning in fixing his hair for a day-long torment. He will have his dress subservient to health and comfort, and freedom of breath and motion. You say he is in bondage to the changes of fashion as much as the women are. But he contrives to keep these conditions intact. His new styles are not allowed to trench on his comfort and health, and the higher interests of life. If he changes the cut of his hair, he still keeps the sweetness and unconsciousness of short locks ; he does not let them grow inconveniently long, or canker his head with a frowsy chignon. If he changes the fashion of his coat, it is almost unnoticeable, and you may be sure it is at no sacrifice of ease. His pantaloons may be cut a little more baggy or a little more statuesque, but never with trails or any impediment to his natural gait. His hat is always the same serviceable sun-shade, and his cap the same protection from the weather, no matter what the details of style.

'Well, you say that the women dress to please the men, and if women are foolish, men make them so. My answer to that is, that men are as fond of pleasing women as women are of pleasing men, and more so ; but they have wit enough to accomplish their object without the monstrous sacrifices women make. Whether any amount of education and opportunity will give women this wit, or diminish the advantage man has gained, remains to be seen.'

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